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Indians, Markets, and Rainforests: Theory, Methods, Analysis

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number of social persona preserved in ornaments. Additionally, he establishes the potential fallacies that can be encountered in the interpretation of foreign or decadent metal objects. Inevitably, the volume closes with Cristóbal Gnecco's paean to the social construction of knowledge, and the demise of alterity at the hands of a relentless global capitalism. He observes that archaeology is not the only valid or legitimate perspective on the past. Although he emphasizes his native multicultural Colombia, this point is certainly valid everywhere. Gnecco considers it paradoxical that anthropologists are not more reflexive, yet I suspect that we are all reflexive to some extent. Perhaps we differ in how we deal with our individual reflexivity. In an ironic twist, Gnecco does not consider it coincidental that archaeologists tend to publish obscure prose in narrowly circulated venues. He finishes by telling us that dialogue not only can never be established between different voices because of their incompatibility, but that it actually destroys alterity. The only way out of this conundrum is to recognize the mutual existence of multivocality. Perhaps naively, I have assumed that this is what anthropology, at least in part, has been doing all along.

Despite the inevitable methodological or theoretical quibbles that we all carry when reading the contributions of our colleagues, I found that this stimulating book made me think. In his introductory chapter, Politis proposes that the book's contributions hope to "... capture the diversity, to reflect on the origin and development, and to explore new areas of research and theoretical-methodological approaches in the archaeology of Latin America" (p. 10). Keeping in mind the constraints of publishing, and the inevitable problems that can arise when dealing with the idiosyncrasies of multiple authors, I believe the book has achieved this in admirable fashion.

Indians, Markets, & Rainforests: Theory, Methods, Analysis. Ricardo A. Godoy. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001. xviii + 256 pp., appendix, references, index. \$68.00 (cloth), \$29.00 (paper). ISBN 0-231-11784-1. ISBN 0-231-11785-X. [www.columbia.edu/cu/cup]

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Expansion of markets and trade is often touted as a path forward for the development of rural areas throughout Latin America. There are, in fact, very few social problems analyzed over the past decade that have not provoked one analysis or another suggesting markets and private property ownership as a panacea. The book under review promises a sober and measured consideration of markets and indigenous peoples. The aim is to speak to policy debates and rural initiatives in Latin America in a time of neoliberal reforms. The

underlying concern is to provide a more precise description of the way that market involvement may affect the quality of life, use of resources, and knowledge of indigenous peoples. Author Godoy did field research for this project and oversaw extensive data collection by a number of field researchers. The chief originality of his approach lies in his effort to make operational econometric models to assess the effects of markets on the types of populations often studied by anthropologists. The book's measured message for development specialists and policymakers is that triumphal proclamations about the efficacy of markets are not indicated by the data, but neither are forecasts of imminent disaster. According to Godoy:

The largest empirical lesson from the analysis is that markets seem to produce unclear, sometimes benign, and sometimes harmful effects on quality of life and the environment. Trade and price theory predict some of the ambiguity. Trade and price theory suggest that markets should produce unclear effects on the loss or retention of plant and animal knowledge or on the sustainability of natural resources extracted by indigenous people. Price theory suggests that markets should both increase and decrease the amount of tropical rainforest cut by households, depending on the level of income of households and on how households integrate to the market (p. 204).

From a policy perspective, the conclusions seem to be nuanced. State safeguards will have to be considered as part of any efforts to deregulate and privatize the economy, and indigenous peoples will not inevitably suffer harm as a result of free market policies if these are judiciously balanced with moves to ensure critical education, land and resource access, and health care. A closer look at the research reveals rather serious drawbacks, however. Nothing in the analysis has anything to say about the social and cultural assemblages associated with distinct peoples, and one gets the sense that the peoples in this book are in no sense collectivities, despite self-identification as "indígenas." In fact, evasiveness regarding the social analysis of both indigenous peoples and markets will make it difficult, if not impossible, for anthropologists to incorporate the book's findings in their own work on development. Ultimately, the author seems to be asserting that the effects of markets must be gauged by how they bear on individuals rather than on communities or cultures. Anthropologists working with indigenous peoples rarely entertain this possibility, and it would have been interesting to raise this as a topic for debate. However, the author allows the assumptions of neoclassical economics to stand in for open discussion on this issue, thus raising some question about the intended readership for the book. Ultimately, one could wager that nonanthropologists will find the book's conclusions most palatable.

Separate chapters consist of stand-alone studies into relations between degree of market involvement and a series of ecological, social and cultural

trends that seem relevant to conservation and development policy: forest clearance; game consumption; household size, dependency/producer ratio and farm output, and leisure; income, credit access, and health; sharing of different kinds of resources; knowledge of plants and animals; and personal propensity to defer gratification. The potpourri of issues are never really related to one another but have been considered important by conservationists and development specialists. In matters not directly related to policy, Godoy raises the issue of Chayanov's notion of noncapitalist household production and Sahlin's ideas of the affluence of leisure enjoyed by foraging peoples. Although the studies are tailored for comparability between peoples in different regions, as a whole they never coalesce into a picture of the situation faced by any one group.

The indigenous groups among whom the author or his research associates did fieldwork were the Tawahka of eastern Honduras (population 900–1,000); the Bolivian Tsimané (Chimane) numbering 5,124 in the lowland department of Beni; the Chiquitano (Chikitano), whose total of 69,590 make them the largest indigenous group in the Bolivian lowlands; the Yuracaré (3,339); and the Mojeños (population 19,759) of the lowland area north of Cochabamba. A map supplementing the text would have been highly desirable.

Although some reference is made to existing ethnography and disciplinary debates, sociological background is exceedingly thin and ethnographic description is frustratingly superficial. For example, although the neoclassical paradigm is modeled on exchanges between households and firms, we remain clueless regarding the cultural principles and relations of and between households, although we do learn about the average number and standard deviation of inhabitants. Neither do we learn about kinship and social organization, ritual, ethnogenesis, or political authority, although some groups sampled have developed political federations to further their collective interests. There is minimal information regarding major subsistence orientation, but no contextualization of production organization. Most of the text is taken up with the justification for methodological decisions regarding the definition and measurement of specific variables needed to construct the models and obtain quantitative results.

Thus there is a mismatch between the underlying question regarding the welfare of indigenous peoples and the method that focuses on choices or attributes of individuals that forestall anthropologically meaningful inquiry. The relative looseness of social theory stands in contrast to the precision of the quantifiable results. Most generally, the author takes correlations between individual households and such measures as the amount of on- and off-farm income and amount of forest cleared, and then purports to draw conclusions about markets. Greater income is taken to be a measure of greater market integration and conclusions are reached regarding how markets operate, to wit: "markets worsen conservation before improving it" (p. 86). Markets are

thereby converted from social forms of distribution into mysterious behavioral proclivities that attach themselves to the minds of individual men and women. The amount of behavior exhibited by individuals is interpreted as, variously, “integration to the market,” “strong or weak links to the market,” “becoming part of the market,” or “absorption to the market.” The author explicitly assumes that “people and households self-select how much of the outside culture they will absorb, how much they will sell or buy in the market” (p. 10).

The gradualist, evolutionary assumptions of modernization and development theory are built into Godoy’s models: greater income reflects greater market involvement, which in turn reflects a higher level of economic development. The author only refers to this assumption tangentially, but there is no other way to explain how one could conclude that income levels of individual households should necessarily be correlated with greater integration to the market. While the author is at pains to disassociate himself from any prognosis of evolutionary trends (e.g., see p.8), he recognizes the difficulty of relying on “cross-sectional analysis of people, households and villages at one moment in time” (p. 7) to reflect a process of market integration. However, individuals are assumed to start out small and gradually increase their income, although it is never explained why one could not convert to total cash cropping or wage labor all at once. The evident impossibility of this option speaks volumes of the situation in which most indigenous people find themselves and the limited extent of “commodification” and markets in the worlds inhabited by the people described.

Curiously, all the discussion about choices and markets evades what is certainly the major issue for indigenous peoples, that is, not whether to acquire commodities but *how* to acquire commodities. This entails qualitative questions of how to forge relations with institutions beyond the village community, including market institutions of different kinds, rather than quantitative questions of “how much.” Nonmarket channels for acquiring commodities, such as collective action, are clearly missing from the mix, although indigenous peoples have recourse to this option as well.

From the perspective of a quantitative modeler, Godoy himself identifies major drawbacks with his method, due to its inability to “control well for endogeneity or for the unobserved fixed attributes of peoples or localities” (p. 7). On reading the book, an ethnographer might well conclude that all that is specific to cultural difference is hidden within these dimensions, for every effort is made to remove their relevance to the analysis through the use of dummy variables representing the effects of locale and efforts made to filter out the effects of endogeneity. Indeed, the method sacrifices its ability to say anything specifically relating to the condition of indigeness. As the author states:

This book is about how markets affect the welfare and the environment of

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any rural society. Although the indigenous people of the tropical rainforests of Latin America are the societies used to develop and to test hypotheses, neither the use of indigenous people nor the use of the Neotropics is necessary to test the hypotheses. The theory and the hypotheses apply to any rural population in any place and could have been tested with any other rural population undergoing incorporation into the market (pp. 13-4).

If Godoy is unperturbed by the appearance of cultural difference, one must say that he is equally unflappable in the face of markets in different commodities. There are no specific peoples or market institutions in his models, only the assumption of a gradual evolutionary process of incorporation into the cash economy that takes place everywhere, but at different rates.

The book is quite instructive regarding the difficulty of deriving econometric models resting on individual choice from social theory that by and large focus on institutional contexts and social relationships. For example, after a brief allusion to Marcel Mauss' *Essay on the Gift* (1924), Godoy attempts to empirically demonstrate whether modernization weakens reciprocity by measuring empirical instances of sharing. In essence, he treats reciprocity not as a structural principle but as a form of catastrophic insurance taken out by individuals as hedges against future disasters. Godoy suggests that:

Reciprocity is analyzed by measuring changes in the wealth of a household between two periods of time (t and $t+1$), and relating the changes to the random misfortunes of one's neighbors at time t (pp. 156-57).

But, it turns out that little support for reciprocity is found and perhaps

the transition out of a gift and exchange economy—if there ever was one—has already taken place (p. 170).

It is, of course, a misuse of the concept of reciprocity to treat it as merely individual calculation. In general Godoy's promise of resolving debates in social theory through empirical measurement entails a transmogrification of a concept so that it can be interpreted at the level of individual choice rather than a property or quality of (relatively) stable sets of relationships. The qualitative differences between systems of social relations are thus translated into mere quantities, which themselves stand for or are correlated with level of income.

In his book *The Theory of Capitalist Development*, over 60 years ago, Paul Sweezy took aim at economic analyses that bypassed social relations. He argued that concepts such as money wages, rent, interest, profit, and capital then appear drained of social content, so that

the resulting universal categories are applied indifferently to all kinds of

systems. These systems are then judged to differ from one another largely in unessential matters of form ... they are evaluated not in social terms, but by reference to abstract models which are felt to be of prior logical importance (1942:7).

I quote Sweezy because the mindset he criticizes is evident in the present work. For Godoy, sophisticated quantitative rigor is paramount because measuring what an Indian does once he possesses cash must reveal the effects of the market. The implicit reasoning holds that once the money form of value is introduced (money itself being an apparently universal category), markets assume shape. When departing from the ideal form of logical models, markets may be “distorted.” But, as an economic universal, markets emerge from a variety of social forms, inexorably bubbling to the surface when not repressed, whereupon they are held to be “causes.” For example, Godoy (p. 6) asserts that

the most rigorous method for studying the effects of markets on welfare and on conservation consists of giving gifts of cash to [indigenous] villagers selected at random, measuring changes in outcomes before and after the transfer, and comparing changes in outcomes between those who received the transfer (treatment samples) and those who did not (control sample).

Contemplating this statement, I am struck by the troubling combination of unreality and optimism that is matched only by the disturbing realization that the worldview of the neoclassical economist, in which supply magically appears to meet demand, is the ruling view of our age. The gulf between anthropology and this view yawns as a dizzying abyss.

So, there is good news and bad news here for *Tipiti* readers. On the one hand, Godoy has labored to craft an empirical account of indigenous rural life to measure the effects of markets in areas that matter to conservationists and development specialists. In the process, he shows how tricky this enterprise is to accomplish. The bad news is that the econometric orientation itself makes indigenous sociopolitical organization, history, and social relations disappear. We are left with no clue as to how markets arise and how indigenous peoples persist and adapt in the real world.

O uso ritual da ayahuasca. Beatriz Caiuby Labate & Wladimir Sena Araújo (editors). Campinas (São Paulo, Brazil): Mercado das Letras / FAPESP, 2002. 686 pp. R\$68.00 (paper). ISBN 85 85725-91-5.
[www.mercado-de-letras.com.br]

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